

CAUSAL MODEL FOR MANAGEMENT OF SUBCONTRACTORS IN WASTE MINIMIZATION

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CONTENTS	PAGE
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Acknowledgement	ii
Contents	iii
Summary	x
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xv
List of Appendices	xvi
List of Abbreviations	xvii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1	Overview	1
1.2	Background	1
1.3	Identification of the knowledge gap	2
1.4	Research problem	4
1.5	Objectives of thesis	5
	1.5.1 Aim of study	5
	1.5.2 Research objectives	5
	1.5.3 Research hypothesis	6
1.6	Scope of thesis	6
1.7	Method of research	7
	1.7.1 Literature review	8
	1.7.2 Model construction	8
	1.7.3 Model testing	9
	1.7.4 Model validation	10
1.8	Structure of thesis	10
1.9	Summary	12

CHAPTER TWO

CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE

2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	Fundamental problem of waste in the construction industry	13

2.2.1	Issue of construction waste in Singapore	15
2.2.2	Poor attitude towards waste in the Singapore construction industry	17
2.3	The origins and nature of construction and demolition waste	18
2.4	Types of waste	21
2.4.1	Natural waste	22
2.4.2	Direct waste	23
2.4.3	Indirect waste	23
2.5	Material and time waste	24
2.5.1	Material waste	24
2.5.2	Time waste	26
2.6	Quantification of construction and demolition waste	26
2.7	Implications of construction and demolition waste	27
2.7.1	Industry response to waste minimization	29
2.7.2	Government's current approach to waste minimization	30
2.8	Conclusion	31

CHAPTER THREE

WASTE MINIMIZATION

3.1	Introduction	32
3.2	Theory of waste management	34
3.3	Integrated waste management system	35
3.4	Waste minimization in Singapore	36
3.5	Waste minimization in construction	37
3.5.1	Hierarchy of construction and demolition materials disposal	39
3.5.2	Benefits of construction waste minimization	41
3.6	The 3 "R"s of construction waste minimization	41
3.6.1	Source reduction	42
3.6.2	Reuse / salvage of materials	43
3.6.3	Recycling	44
3.7	Reasons for waste minimization	44
3.8	Current difficulties in waste minimization	45
3.8.1	Documentation	45
3.8.2	'Kepala' system	45
3.8.3	Large pool of unskilled labor	46
3.8.4	Quality of recycled materials	46
3.8.5	Wasteful practice	47
3.9	Conclusion	48

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSTRUCTION SUBCONTRACTING

4.1	Introduction	50
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4.2	Subcontracting	50
4.3	Subcontracting in Singapore construction	52
4.4	The flexible firm model	54
4.4.1	Types of flexibility	55
4.4.1.1	Functional flexibility	56
4.4.1.2	Financial flexibility	56
4.4.1.3	Numerical flexibility	56
4.4.2	Types of work force	57
4.4.2.1	The core work force	58
4.4.2.2	The peripheral work force	58
4.4.3	Criticism of the model	59
4.4.4	Applicability of Flexible Firm Model to construction	60
4.5	The case for subcontracting	61
4.6	The relationships between the subcontractors and the main contractors	63
4.7	Types of construction subcontractors in Singapore	64
4.8	The labour employment practice in the local industry	69
4.8.1	The 'kepala' system	69
4.8.2	Reasons for use	71
4.8.3	Drawbacks of the system	71
4.9	Waste problem caused by subcontractors	72
4.9.1	Wasteful practice of subcontractors	73
4.9.2	Incidence of rework	74
4.9.3	Efficient usage of construction materials by subcontractors	75
4.9.4	Integration and coordination of team players	76
4.10	Conclusion	77

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF MODEL

5.1	Introduction	78
5.2	Concept of Supply Chain Management	78
5.2.1	Evolution of supply chain management	79
5.2.2	Supply chain	80
5.2.3	Definition of supply chain management	80
5.2.4	Basics of supply chain management	82
5.2.5	Goals of supply chain management	83
5.2.6	Construction supply chain management	84
5.2.7	Greening construction supply chain	87
5.3	Waste minimization through supply chain management	88
5.3.1	Stringent selection of subcontractors based on waste performance	89
5.3.2	Training of subcontractors	90
5.3.3	Quality of documentation provided to subcontractors	90
5.3.4	Co-operation among team players	91
5.4	Concept of Management Control	92
5.4.1	Controlling process	94

5.4.2	Types of control	95
5.4.3	Control system	96
5.5	Waste minimization through management control	97
5.5.1	Main contractor's control over subcontractors' workmanship	98
5.5.2	Main contractor's control over subcontractors' usage of materials	99
5.5.3	Goal-setting with subcontractors	101
5.5.4	Main contractor's control of suppliers' material quality	102
5.6	Construction waste minimization strategies	103
5.7	Conclusion	105

CHAPTER SIX

MODEL CONSTRUCTION

6.1	Introduction	106
6.2	Causality methodology	106
6.2.1	Background	106
6.2.2	Principles of causation	108
6.2.3	Causal Modeling	108
6.2.4	Basics of causal model	110
6.2.4.1	Component variables	110
6.2.4.2	Relationship	110
6.2.4.3	Causal loop diagramming	112
6.2.4.4	Feedback structure of the system	113
6.2.5	Applicability of causation to construction projects	114
6.2.6	The rationale for using causal modeling	115
6.3	Construction Waste Minimization model	116
6.4	Summary	122

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESEARCH METHOD

7.1	Introduction	123
7.2	Questionnaire survey	123
7.2.1	Questionnaire design	126
7.2.2	Survey package	128
7.2.3	Pilot testing	128
7.2.4	Sampling	129
7.3	Data processing for questionnaire survey	131
7.3.1	Mean relevance rating	133
7.3.2	Standard deviation	133
7.3.3	One sample t-test	134
7.3.4	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	136

7.4	Case study	138
7.5	Summary	139

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH RESULTS

8.1	Introduction	140
8.2	Techniques used in data analysis	140
8.3	Data analysis of main contractors' survey	141
8.3.1	Response rate	141
8.3.2	Designation of respondents	142
8.3.3	Financial categories	143
8.3.4	ISO 14000 certification	143
8.3.5	Proportion of work subcontracted	144
8.3.6	Types of work subcontracted	144
8.3.7	Implementation of waste minimization strategies	145
8.3.8	Subcontractor's role in waste minimization	146
8.3.9	Over-reliance on subcontractors is responsible for wastage	146
8.3.10	Building materials that contribute most to levels of wastage	147
8.3.11	Readiness of subcontractors to minimize waste	149
8.3.12	Reduction of negative environmental impacts	149
8.3.13	Problem of waste	150
8.3.14	Benefits of waste minimization	151
8.3.15	Difficulties in waste minimization	152
8.4	Data analysis of subcontractors' survey	154
8.4.1	Response rate	154
8.4.2	Nature of subcontracting	155
8.4.3	Financial categories	155
8.4.4	Type of subcontracting system provided	156
8.4.5	Main area of subcontracting	156
8.4.6	Implementation of waste minimization strategies	157
8.4.7	Waste minimization strategies implemented by main contractors	158
8.4.8	Preconditions of level of waste enforced by main contractors	159
8.4.9	Specific policies on material wastage control on site	159
8.4.10	Readiness of subcontractors to minimize waste	160
8.4.11	Reduction of negative environmental impacts	161
8.4.12	Problem of waste	162
8.4.13	Reasons for waste minimization strategies	163
8.4.14	Limitations to implementation of waste minimization	164
8.5	Summary	165

CHAPTER NINE

CASE STUDIES AND EVALUATION OF WASTE STRATEGIES

9.1	Introduction	167
9.2	Model testing	167
9.2.1	The need for construction waste minimization strategies	167
9.2.2	Construction waste generators	169
9.2.3	Construction waste minimization strategies	170
9.2.4	Construction waste minimization methods	173
9.3	Conclusion of model testing using survey results	175
9.4	Validation of the model using case studies	175
9.5	Background of the case studies	177
9.5.1	Case Study 1	178
9.5.2	Case Study 2	181
9.5.3	Case Study 3	182
9.6	Waste minimization initiatives	183
9.6.1	Case Study 1	183
9.6.1.1	Agreement with the model	187
9.6.1.2	Deviation from the model	187
9.6.2	Case Study 2	188
9.6.2.1	Agreement with the model	191
9.6.2.2	Deviation from the model	192
9.6.3	Case Study 3	193
9.6.3.1	Agreement with the model	196
9.6.3.2	Deviation from the model	197
9.7	Discussions	197
9.7.1	Conclusion of model validating using case studies findings	198
9.7.2	Comparison of case studies findings	201
9.7.3	Other waste minimization methods	203
9.7.4	Final model	204
9.8	Limitation of validation	206
9.9	Summary	207

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

10.1	Summary and main findings	209
10.2	Validation of the hypothesis	213
10.3	Benefits of the Construction Waste Minimization model	214
10.4	Recommendations	215
10.5	Contributions	216
10.6	Limitations of study	216
10.7	Conclusion	217
10.8	Future directions of the research	218

REFERENCE	220
BIBLIOGRAPHY	244
APPENDICES	260
(39,928 words)	

SUMMARY

The level of construction and demolition waste generation is an important indicator of the environmental acceptability of a construction activity. The use of excessive construction materials constitutes a negative impact on the environment and the disposal of that construction and demolition waste causes further problems. Such construction and demolition waste is composed of potentially valuable materials. Thus, there is an urgent need to reduce the amount of such waste. In order to solve the problem of high wastage levels in the Singapore construction industry, it is important that contractors adopt steps to minimize the production of construction and demolition waste as a vital part of their construction programs.

This study aims to develop specific waste minimization strategies for main contractors to curb the waste problem caused by subcontractors. The scope of the study is limited to the larger general building and civil engineering contractors, and trade subcontractors. Literature review was done on the waste minimization issues and this was followed by model construction.

This study has introduced the application of causality to the problem of waste generation among contractors in the Singapore construction industry. A causal model is developed to explain the dynamic construction waste generation behaviour exhibited by contractors on site. The model shows that several fundamental factors, ranging from the wasteful practice of subcontractors, lack of integration and coordination of team players,

inefficient usage of construction materials by subcontractors, to incidence of rework, are the main causes of waste generation on site.

Based on causal methodology, the Construction Waste Minimization model was constructed using Supply Chain Management and Management Control concepts. From these concepts, eight main strategies and other methods for main contractors to manage subcontractors in waste minimization were identified.

The model was tested in two ways. Firstly, a postal questionnaire survey of contractors and subcontractors in Singapore was undertaken to check the validity of the variables in the model. The survey results were used to test the validity of the construction waste minimization methods obtained from the literature review and used in the model construction. Secondly, three in-depth case studies were conducted to confirm the causal loops in the model. The findings from the case studies generally support the model and are consistent with those from the survey. The survey results and case study findings confirm that the model is valid and the case studies corroborate the model's practical application.

It is recommended that both main contractors and subcontractors in the construction industry adopt the Construction Waste Minimization model which is developed and tested in this study to reduce construction waste in their future projects.

List of Tables

Table	Description	Page
7.1	BCA registered contractor category and tendering limit	131
8.1	Responses from main contractors' survey	141
8.2	Designation of respondents	142
8.3	Financial categories	143
8.4	ISO 14000 certification	143
8.5	Proportion of work subcontracted	144
8.6	Types of work subcontracted	145
8.7	Implementation of waste minimization strategies	146
8.8	Subcontractors' role in waste minimization	146
8.9	Over reliance on subcontractors is responsible for wastage	147
8.10	Building materials that contribute most to levels of wastage	148
8.11	Readiness of subcontractors to minimize waste	149
8.12	Reducing of negative environmental impacts	150
8.13	Cross tabulation: Current problem of construction and demolition waste	151
8.14	Benefits of waste minimization to the main contractor	152

8.15	Current difficulties in waste minimization	153
8.16	Responses from the subcontractors' survey	154
8.17	Nature of subcontracting	155
8.18	Financial categories	156
8.19	Type of subcontracting system provided	156
8.20	Main area of subcontracting	157
8.21	Implementation of waste minimization strategies	158
8.22	Waste minimization strategies implemented by main contractors	158
8.23	Preconditions of level of waste enforced by main contractors	159
8.24	Specific policies on material wastage control on site	160
8.25	Readiness of subcontractors to minimize waste	160
8.26	Reduction of negative environmental impacts	161
8.27	Cross tabulation: Current problem of construction and demolition waste	162
8.28	Reasons for waste minimization strategies	164
8.29	Limitations to implementation of waste minimization	165
9.1	The need for waste minimization strategies	168
9.2	Construction waste	168
9.3	Construction waste generators	169

9.4	Strategies that can lead to the minimization of construction waste generation	171
9.5	Construction waste minimization methods	176
9.6	General information from the Case Studies	179

List of Figures

Figure	Description	Page
1.1	Research approach	11
4.1	Typical project organization structure in Singapore	65
4.2	The present system of contracting in Singapore	66
4.3	Factors affecting construction waste generation	73
5.1	Construction waste minimization strategies	104
6.1	Causal relationships	111
6.2	Construction Waste Minimization model	118
9.1	Final Construction Waste Minimization model	205

List of Appendices

Appendix	Description	Page
A	Cover Letter	261
B	Questionnaire: Survey on Waste Minimization (Main Contractor)	262
C	Questionnaire: Survey on Waste Minimization (Subcontractor)	269
D	Reminder Letter	274
E	Structured Interview for the Case Study	275
F	The Polarity Review Process	278

List of Abbreviations

BCA -	Building and Construction Authority, Singapore
BRE -	Building Research Establishment, UK
BREEAM -	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
BWAS -	Building Waste Assessment model
CIB -	International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction
CIDB -	Construction Industry Development Board, Singapore
CIOB -	Chartered Institute of Building, UK
CIRIA -	Construction Industry Research and Information Association, UK
CONQUAS -	Construction Quality Assessment System
CWM -	Construction Waste Minimization
CWMM-	Construction Waste Minimization model
CD -	Construction and Demolition
DB -	Design-and-Build
EA -	Environmental Auditing
EIA -	Environment Impact Assessment
EMS -	Environmental Management System
ENV -	Ministry of Environment, Singapore
FFM -	Flexible Firm model
HDB -	Housing and Development Board, Singapore
JIT -	Just-in-Time
LTA -	Land Transport Authority, Singapore
MIT -	Massachusetts Institute of Technology, UK
MND -	Ministry of National Development, Singapore
MOL -	Ministry of Labour, Singapore
MOM -	Ministry of Manpower, Singapore
NEA -	National Environment Agency, Singapore
NTU -	Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
NUS -	National University of Singapore, Singapore
SCM -	Supply Chain Management
SCAL-	Singapore Contractors Association Limited
SEPA -	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SLOT-	Singapore List of Trade Subcontractors
SM-	Scientific Management
SPSS -	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TQM -	Total Quality Management
UK -	United Kingdom
UKEPA -	Environmental Protection Agency, UK
US -	United States
USEPA -	Environmental Protection Agency, US
WM-	Waste Minimization
WMP -	Waste Management Plan